

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please amend paragraph [0029] of the specification as follows:

In FIG. 3, the light barrier structure 28 is shown in a view with the components exploded upwards from the housing exterior 44 of the reading device 40. The top plate 50 is also shown. The device shown in FIG. 3 corresponds to the device shown in FIG. 2, and is essentially the same embodiment. The receiving port 45 is bounded on its lower edge by bottom plate 56, and on its upper edge by top plate 50. Within the receiving port 45 there is a pressure plate 51, under which the membrane strip 41 is inserted. The pressure plate 51 is held by spring 52 in a resilient engagement with the membrane strip 41 (not shown in FIG. 3). The membrane strip 41 is held over ~~aperture~~ a light transmissive region 54, which happens to be a circular aperture in FIG. 3. However, the aperture could be of many different shapes and sizes, and most preferably approximates the size and/or shape of the zone of interest upon the membrane strip 41 that is to be examined. The channel 53 forms the conduit through which the membrane strip 41 is inserted. Screws 55a-d holds the top plate 50 down upon the housing 44.

Please amend paragraph [0035] of the specification as follows:

[0035] One alternate embodiment of the invention is shown in FIG. 5. A light barrier structure 81 is provided, below an LCD display 74. The light barrier structure is bounded from above by top plate 72, and from below by bottom plate 78. A reading device 65 is comprised of a housing 73 having a receiving port 64 bounded upon the top by a hood 66. The receiving port 64 consists in part of a channel 68 that runs vertically as shown in FIG. 5. A light transmissive region ~~An aperture~~ 69, (which in FIG. 5 happens to be ~~in the shape of a rectangular aperture~~ rectangle) is located in the bottom of the channel 68. A first notch 70 and a second notch 71 are provided as locating points to receive a membrane strip having nub 77 which will be seen in FIG. 5a. Screws 67a and 67b hold the hood 66 down upon the top plate 72. The function of the hood 66 is to reduce the amount of ambient light that impacts near the aperture 69, increasing the sensitivity of the reading device 65, and improving the signal to noise ratio of results obtained. An on/off switch 75 is shown near the right side of the housing 73.